800

EDITOR
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EDITORIAL STAFF
Albert Dixon
Margaret Forell
Rodney Hardee
John Luby Jr.
Nancy North

DESIGN
Hiro Narita

PRODUCTION
Harry Mulford
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ADVISORS

The 800 is a literary magazine published by the students of the San Francisco Art Institute. It is our hope that this publication will serve to enhance the artist's power of creativity by affording him this additional dimension of expression.

As the artist creates he becomes acutely aware that man may never receive a dispensation from himself; his single greatest and most rewarding experience comes from meeting himself. The creations of the artist make the deepest sound when they come as products of that meeting. On the following pages are the shapes of that sound...

The Editors

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The Temple of Moloch-edon

Black mercenary swans will herald him
who leads a foolish choir of bloated frogs
upon a distant lake of crimson pride.
Thus does a vain Moloch-edon goddess
lead her generals from a sublime moon
to contemplate a massacre of man;
searching to find an invincible myth--
a dead soul beyond the arch primeaval
who stands proud upon the ramparts of Hell,
gripping his shield of lies and sword of hate--
Achilles, a shadowy charlaton,
a harlot for the hearts of fair-haired youth,
calling: "Tarry not, be on apace
to Glory's tangible realities."
Prepared now, Moloch-edon lays her plans:
iambic columns are cleverly built
to support marble warrior heroes
under heavy domes of impending doom;
a temple of mystic gleaming ideal,
a sorceress to youthful discontent,
seducing freedom from passionate hands
which reach out eagerly to grasp the robe
of that high prince of immortality
who for each one holds out brave Hector's head--
that they may know the power of the sword
which flinches not from splattering of blood,
and leads on the parade of flag wavers
who march blindly with shouts of Fatherland.
Moloch-edon forever captures those
who let the merchant's greed make youth the fool
whose blood will quench the thirst of war's hot sands,
disgracing the approach of future dawns.

Wayne Miller

BALLAD

She lingered in the silver shade
And listened to the voices made

By sighing winds of other days;
Of dead men whispering the ways

Of death and dying in muted tones,
With mingled cries and velvet groans,

Like water softly falling clear,
Beneath the plum tree standing near

The kitchen door where long she played
In younger days when summer stayed

To quiet fears of coming death,
When men must breathe their last deep breath

And die the death of dying men,
Returning to the earth again.

She walked again the chilly street
And wondered, gazing at her feet,

The ways of life and bitter truth:
The plums she gathered in her youth,

Eaten with a bitter taste,
Forgotten quickly in her haste;

(As men, forgotten when they die)
To chase another butterfly

Of whimsy through the garden gate;
(A particle of dust that fate

Let slip and drifting downward, fall
To quiet death beyond recall).

She stood beneath the old plum tree,
Its' winter branches empty, free

Of burdened life until the spring
New life of flaming sun would bring,

Again to die and put to rest:
The soft white peace of blessed rest.

Once more the dying wind repeated;
Alone she stood, alone, defeated:

She gave up to Eternity
And hanged herself upon that tree.

Harry Mulford

Prostituted Thought

How the mind seeks a prostitute
In the gray hours of time!
It moves through dark night
To its chosen haven,
There to lie at dawn,
All its dreams denied conception--.
The gratification of a false love;
Then return to day
In the stupor of debauchery,
Its faculty blind to light,
Awaiting the night--the dawn.

Judie O'Brien

Our Love is a Scalene Triangle

Our love is a Scalene Triangle:
None of the sides are equal, but
We are also right, obtuse, and acute.
You, dear, are the Hypotenuse of the Right,
I am the Base, he is the Altitude, and
You are the Square Equal to the Sum of us.
Our relationship is expressed in a Formula
Two thousand five hundred and thirteen
Years old; or so the book says, on page
Two hundred thirty-seven, Revised Edition.
Perhaps we are really a Cylinder: you are
The Lateral Curved Surface, and we are
Two Equal and Parallel Circles as Bases.
How terrible if we are a Pyramid; when you
Are a Base of Any Polygon, and we
Triangular Faces that meet in a Common Vortex!
We are fortunate not to be Moslems, I think--
With all those Quadrilaterals, Pentagons,
Hexagons, Octagons, Decagons, and Dodecagons,
The symbols of love affairs must get very
Confused in the harem of the Sultan of Baghdad.
How much simpler it would be if he
Would become a conservative Circle, or
Maybe a Sphere; then even he
Could have the painful experience of
Explaining the tragic old rule
Of the Right Triangle, to an irate husband
Who has unfortunately come home
Too soon from his week-end trip
Of business in a distant town.

Wayne Miller

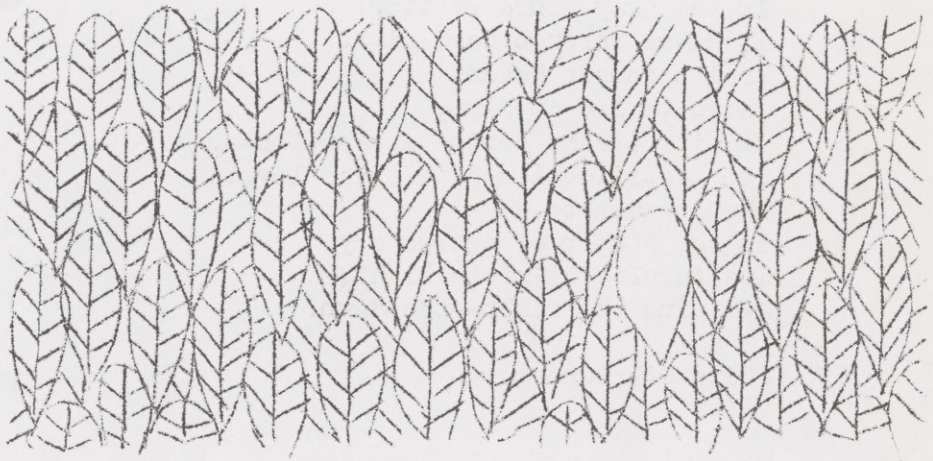
One Act Mime For Karen

Thomas Pitre

The Players:
Young man: In business dress, plain
and,
Numerous gas-station attendants:
All wearing the same white uniform, but of different color, size, and shape.

The Scene:
It is a restroom of a gas-station. It is light out.... the time is the present. (See set diagram below).... Numerous signs are clearly visible to the audience. Over the towel dispenser: RUB, DON'T BLOT, over the door: HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ANYTHING? on the paper towel dispenser: PULL UP AND TEAR DOWN, and most important...over a large button in the largest letters: PUSH BUTTON FOR ATTENDANT.

Stage Directions:
As the curtain rises, the door opens, (revealing three white gasoline pumps in the distance,) and the young man enters, rather at ease. He carries a book, an umbrella, and a large, red ball. He wears a heavy coat, obviously too large for his slight frame.



Y.M:
Places book, and umbrella on shelf near door. He tries to place ball on shelf, but it will not stay put. He tries again...it teaters and falls as he turns to enter toilet. He tries once more, and catches it just as it falls again. He holds it in both hands, annoyed, looks at it, squeezes it, rubs it against himself, and takes it with him into the stall. He holds it under his left arm as he seems to read the large sign: FOR YOUR PROTECTION. He pulls out several tissues and examines them. He puts the ball down and continues examining them. He pulls the center out of them, places several on the seat, pulls at least fifty more out of the dispenser...places these on the seat, and sits down. (He still hasn't taken down his trousers) He closes the door and we see that he has dropped his trousers down. They are pulled up, the door opens, he removes his coat and hangs it on the hook concealing the sign and the button. He returns to the stall

closes the door, and again drops his trousers...(We hear the toilet flush....a long pause...it flushes again.... longer pause....flush...pause...flush)..(About two-three minutes pass here).....
He finishes, opens the door...the ball in his hand...He goes to the sink.....he seems to examine his teeth...He makes a comb out of his fingers and pulls it through his hair.. He puts the ball down, holding it between his legs, as he turns the tap on...He washes methodically face, hands...then he removes a large handkerchief from his pocket, wets it as he removes his shirt, and proceeds to wash his chest, stomach, arm pits, etc He goes to the towel dispenser..(forced to move slowly because he still holds the ball)...He reads the large sign on the dispenser: PULL UP AND TEAR DOWN. He pulls it from the wall, dashes it to the floor, stamps on it scattering the towels and the dispenser...

Old Man:
Opens the door...(The ball rolls out past him as he begins to enter the room)...
He sees what the man is doing and the condition of the place...He turns and exits, rather upset...(but more upset than surprised)...

Young Man:
Picks up towels, and rubs himself over his body...(vigorously...for a long time...It seems to begin to hurt him...he begins to bleed)...The young man persists to rub himself...(he is bleeding profusely now)...he seems unaware of his cuts and the bleeding He continues rubbing...He places the towels and all the litter in the trash container...He notices the blood all over his hands and face...He turns to see the blood covering his torso...He is horrified...as he examines himself more thoroughly...He is frantic as he pulls his shirt on and gathers the articles on the shelf, and turns to the door...He notices his coat and pulls it from the hook, tearing it...He puts it on hurriedly, and goes to the door...It will not open...He tears at it, kicks it but it will not budge...He notices the button...He pushes it and holds it...(Buzzer off stage to curtain)
The door opens...

Attendants:
Enter...one has towels, another, soap, another a broom another a mop...and yet another carrying something all of them fill the room...No one can move. they keep coming, all carrying something, all dressed the same more lights down as the bleeding, young man is pressed closer and closer to the wall still pushing the button...Curtain.....

Abstruse Conversation

How many times have you and I
while talking to sunsets or mountain streams,
heard things that others may never grasp
except swooping birds with indigo wings?

(Many times now, gazing long
in sunset mountain solitude
have I seen burn mysterious
pyre of Phoenix bird multihued).

How many times from separate temples
while nature converses each to each
will we converse in strange ways also
through an image of timeless peace?

(Many times now, far from temples
has nature oft through silent guide
revealed how life is so renewed--
no thing can from her cycle hide).

How many times on the eve of dawnlight
will our feet leap from snug bed nooks
to seek joys we know are hidden
anong forest trails and mystic brooks?

(Many times now, on daylights wane
my mind has burned with secret fires
from those truths I found were waiting
among cathedral wooded spires).

Don't you wish that nature knew us
in all her guises as they are
and not through countless buildings
with long hot highways filled with cars?

(Many times now nature has voiced
across the world, stormy and far
her distaste for man"s constructions
built from forests to hide the stars).

Dewdrops bathing dusty poppies
can give much meditating treat--
if blossoms sprinkle woodland path
why not petals filling city streets?

Wayne Miller

The Fringed Stole

Nancy North

I don't think I was surprised when I learned that I was a problem for Miss Rood, my third grade teacher. Miss Rood was a problem for me. She frightened me--scared me stiff. I knew I was shy and lacked confidence, and that I scared easily in any situation demanding that I speak up and answer clearly and quickly. With Miss Rood, I would freeze, looking at her witch like face and hearing her impatient voice. I felt more stupid and shy than ever.

I was surprised, though, when I learned from my mother that I was invited to have dinner with Miss Rood at her apartment on the following Thursday evening. My mother explained that Miss Rood had told her that she just couldnot reach me and that my performance in class worried her. She hoped, somehow, in becoming better acquainted, she might discover ways in which to help me improve in my studies. My mother felt it was worth trying--while I wasnot at all sure I wanted to be part of such a plan.

All of the week, approaching Thursday, I was disturbed with thinking about ways to avoid having dinner with Miss Rood. At times, I thought--maybe I could run away. I would start, but at the edge of the school yard I would think, what if someone stops me and asks where I am going, or if I have permission to be off the school grounds. What would I say? Nothing, absolutely nothing. In class, I would think hard--about fainting, like Nana described it, "get sick and dizzy," and end up flat and white on the floor. When this effort wouldn't work for me I would imagine being seriously ill or, better still, in an automobile accident, all broken up and bloody. But of course none of these grim alternatives came to pass--and Thursday found me in my usual good health, though increasingly anxious in dread of the evening's events.

With the blackboards cleaned, waste baskets emptied and the closet picked up, there was nothing left for me to do while I waited for Miss Rood to finish her attendance chart and straighten her desk, before we could leave for her apartment. I pulled on my corduroy jacket and stared out of the windows at the gray sky and the brown, leafless trees bordering the school yard, until she announced brightly, "Well, Nancy, I guess we can go now!"

She was wearing her bright, green reefer and a small, flat hat on top of her glistening white hair. Smiling, she said, "You'll carry these papers carefully, Nancy," and handed me three, bulging, manila folders. I replied, casually I hoped, "Sure--of course, Miss Rood."

Giving the classroom door a firm tug, she continued to talk as we walked down the wide, dark corridor to the front door. "While I am correcting those papers, you can be making valentines, Nancy." She searched my face with curious concern at my unresponsive silence while she held the heavy door open for me. As we passed through the doorway, she put her free hand on my shoulder and asked, "You do like to make valentines, don't you?"

Inwardly, I shuddered at the warmth of her hand on my shoulder, but managed to say, "Uh, huh. I mean, yes, Miss Rood." Immediately, I felt sorry, very sorry I couldn't have answered her with more enthusiasm, since she seemed so intent on making this occasion a very special adventure. But valentines--if they were the sort that required cutting and pasting, then I knew I wouldn't be able to do at all what she would expect of me. Scissors were the trouble. I couldn't cut things well, and I made messes when I pasted. People--teachers, always thought that because you could draw you could cut things and do anything with your hands and be clean and neat doing it.

Miss Rood nodded a cordial, "Good evening," to Mr. Torrance, one of the janitors, as we turned from the school

yard onto the sidewalk along Throckmorton Avenue. As we passed the little houses, nestled deep in the Redwood grove, the older, tall, shingled houses and finally, the little shops on our way down town, I kept in step with Miss Rood's energetic stride. She was a friendly, if brusque person and greeted acquaintances we met along the way to the Mill Valley Market. I clutched the unwieldy folders to my chest and sorted my disturbed thoughts, while studying her handsome pink face, with its large nose and small, dark blue eyes, deciding I should really try to help her enjoy having me as her guest.

When we reached the market, I felt suddenly unfamiliar upon entering the store, where I frequently accompanied my mother, shopping. I felt at this moment I was a different person, in a different store, among strangers--people who didn't know me. Even the process of selecting groceries, which I usually enjoyed with my mother, loomed as a strange and frightening experience. Inside the door on a window shelf were stacks of open boxes of black berries and Miss Rood asked my opinion in selecting the nicest. At the vegetable counter, she asked me to decide which vegetable we should have for dinner.

With the same sense of frustration I suffered in class when being asked a question--I studied the variety of green, red and yellow vegetables. At that moment I didn't recognize any of them--and I looked sideways at her pink face for some hint or suggestion of her preference. Her face only appeared impatient, as I felt her voice at any moment might also sound if I delayed my choice much longer. I returned to look at the vegetables and identified a box of brussel sprouts--those smelly little green lumps that I couldn't stand to eat! "Brussel sprouts," I thought to myself, "of course!" "All grownups like them--Mommy and Daddy like them and so do all of their friends. Miss Rood is a grownup--so, of course she'll like them!" After all, I had made up my mind to be a nice guest--and my mother's frequently repeated phrase, "Nancy, be a good girl and eat your brussel sprouts," rang in my ears, over and over, until I heard myself saying distinctly, confidently aloud, "Brussel sprouts, please."

Miss Rood's face lighted up with surprise. "Nancy, did you way you want brussel sprouts?" She coughed a little, with wonder, when I nodded assurance.

In the next few moments spent in buying two lamb chops, picking up a quart of milk and a carton of cottage cheese, I felt warm in a sense of success and toyed with the possibility that dinner with Miss Rood might not be so bad after all. At the cashiers she picked up a package of Swiss cookies, which I guessed would go with the berries for dessert, but which I wished I could eat immediately, while we finished our walk to her house.

Out on the street we headed up Corte Madera Avenue, passed the City Hall, where my mother used to work, to a short, steep street, which I thought was appropriately named, "Lower Alcatraz." As we climbed its rough concrete slope, Miss Rood's pace became slower and her face pinker.

I was delighted when we arrived at an area of Redwoods, where a path climbed through a rock garden to a rustic duplex, ending at a porch on the upper apartment, where Miss Rood lived. The living room was small and almost a magenta pink and on the chairs and couch she had large, prussian blue velvet pillows. On the floor was a persian scatter rug, reminding me instantly of Robin's house, where I had spent happy hours playing as a tiny child. The kitchen was smaller still, but its off-white walls gave one a sense of spaciousness and its window looked out among tree tops to the sky and distant hills.

She told me to relax and make myself at home, while she took off her hat and coat and hung them up with my corduroy jacket. Then she started preparations for dinner. When I asked properly, I thought--if I might help her in the

kitchen she answered, "No, but I think you could work on some of those valentines, now." From the lowest shelf under the living room windows, she pulled a box filled with bright red papers, lacey white doilies, crayons, scissors and a jar of paste. She arranged them on the coffee table in front of me and then, perhaps as an afterthought, she turned on television.

My chair wasn't facing the television, but I could see it out of the corner of my eye and listen to the appealing, comical voices of the puppet characters of "Beanie Boy." I knew I'd be curled up on the couch if I were home, devoting my whole interest to Beanie's adventures, but here --I felt obliged to attend to the valentines she wanted me to make.

I don't remember making any very attractive valentines. I suspect instead that they were a disappointment to my hostess since I have never been able to accomplish anything beautiful when I felt uncomfortable or "not at home" --or unhappy. And feeling very unlike myself, I was more intent on being agreeably courteous for Miss Rood's sake.

When dinner was ready, set on the table in the living room I found I had little or no appetite for the food on my plate before me. So it wasn't ravenous hunger that prompted me to wolf down those brussel sprouts, whole--without chewing, one after another. Downing the first, vile smelling, slimey green lump, I managed with a large swallow of milk to wash it down. And so on, until eight, hideously smelly lumps disappeared in rapid succession and sprouts and milk were both all consumed. I gagged and choked when one of the sprouts lodged in my throat, and Miss Rood--as she watched with growing astonishment, asked with alarm, "Is everything alright, dear?" She had hardly touched her own dinner in her concern for me.

"Oh yes," I lyingly assured her, "I'm enjoying this," I squeaked, "dinner." I felt a growing sense of nausea, but satisfaction in thinking how proud and amazed my mother would be to know I had actually eaten eight brussel sprouts without flinching--well, almost without flinching, helped me to conquer my physical discomfort.

It may have been the lights, or perhaps it was my imagination and the now returning discomfort, as I looked at Miss Rood eating her dinner--her magnificent face was crimson, her large, chiseled nose appeared sharper and longer and because of the shadows, her eyes had become smaller and brighter--sort of beady looking, I thought. Her high, wide forehead glistened and through a spun-glass halo, her scalp was glowing a florescent red. Quite like a witch from a glacier castle. Quite like Miss Rood, my frightening teacher whose handsome pink face would turn to crimson in anger and whose voice would resound against the blackboard and windows like a blarring trumpet! I ate my blackberries and cookie in frightened silence, not wishing to look at her again. Until--as she picked up the dishes and went to the kitchen, I caught a glimpse of her profile, restored to normal shape and color.

When we were seated in the living room together, with the table cleared--she brought out a black-watch plaid stole from a basket bag beside the couch. She explained that she was fringing it with the bright green yarn that was rolled up in its folds. She showed me how she was tieing the intricate pattern of knots and fringe and asked if I would like to work on it with her. I was delighted and quite intrigued with the process--and set about carefully following her directions. The yarn was such a pretty color and felt soft between my fingers. For the first time in that whole evening, I felt warm and cozy inside--and I found it fun helping her finish the fringe and she seemed to appreciate my being able to help her. Just as we completed the last three knots and were admiring the finished stole, Miss Rood must have sensed that this was a good note for the evening to close on, for she looked at her watch and remarked, "My! Nancy, it's a little past

eight-thirty. I'd better call a cab for you."

With Miss Rood's flashlight playing on the green plants among the rocks along the dark path's border, I skipped and jumped and ran ahead to the waiting taxi below. It was such a relief to be going home!

A moment's guilt stopped my hurried scramble into the car. I turned to say, "Thanks, Miss Rood, for a very nice time." The sterile words and flat little voice did-not say what I really meant. I wanted to let Miss Rood know I appreciated helping her with the stole and that I recognized her sharing that work with me as an offering of friendship. I felt the evening had not been a failure after all.

At home, as I burst into the living room, my mother was just hanging up the phone. "Hi, Nancy," she greeted me, "that was Miss Rood saying you were on your way." "Guess, Mommy guess! How many brussel sprouts did I eat?" I hoped my painful discomfort was not showing.

"Oh? Hah, Nancy," she chuckled, "I already know, Miss Rood told me that you ate--eight brussel sprouts, without chewing them! And Miss Rood wonders why you like them so much!" I caught my breath--"Oh! You didn't tell her, Mommy, you didn't tell her, did you?" I anxiously watched my mother's face. "No, of course I didn't tell her, honey," my mother answered, laughing, "but I'm pretty sure she doesn't like brussel sprouts any better than you do!" "Why," I asked my mother, "did she tell you she doesn't?" "Well, no--not exactly," my mother said, "it was just the way she said, 'bruss-el spr-routs!" My mother chuckled again and I laughed with her.

On the following morning at school, I saw the stole on the corner of Miss Rood's desk and I was delighted with a secret sense of knowing about it. I was amused too, with a feeling of superiority in thinking of how she had eaten brussel sprouts when she didn't like them too! I watched I watched my classmates as they gathered at her desk to examine the stole, and felt a tremendous pride for her as she responded to their flattering comments by modeling it--turning proudly this way and that, saying, "I made it myself!"

I listened, quietly apart as she explained the intricate proceedure of tieing the fringe, quite as she had patiently explained it to me on the evening before. I watched and waited and suddenly I felt I had shrunken from existence. I was a nobody. I felt embarrased, watching and listening. I wanted to call out, "Have you forgotten I tied so many of those knots?" And, "I helped you make that stole! Don't you remember?" "Don't you even know I'm here?" "Can't you see me? I'm here, I know I'm here." "Look hard. Look real hard--listen, can't you hear me?" Then, certainly in my sense of futility, I wished she would never look at me and never see me again!

-*-

I cry.
The tears
Come,
Gentle
and
Warm,
The
Only
Caress
I
Know.

Judie O'Brien

A Tragic Encounter

Albert Dixon

Characters in the play

The Convict	He shall remain unnamed
An Immortal Being	His name is not necessarily Legion
The Grating	Manifold

There is no sound. The curtain rises on a darkened stage. A figure can be seen pacing left to right in the darkness. It is the convict. As he begins right to left his solitude is interrupted by the presence of a spectral figure reclining against the wall. The convict has been observed for some time.

End of Prologue

Immortal Being: Hello there, I hope I'm not intruding on anything.

Convict: There are no intruders in this place. When did you arrive?

Immortal Being: I came but a moment ago. The purpose of my visit will remain somewhat obscure if you don't mind. But about you, my good man, is it your intention to remain in this dreary state for very much longer? Why, you know, I saw many people enjoying the sun on my way here!

Convict: I didn't hear you come in nor did I see you until this minute. I must be getting used to this routine.

Immortal Being: You did not, Sir, answer my question. But no matter for I shall discover what I want to know at my leisure anyhow. Do you have a candle or a lamp here?

Convict: There isn't any light down here except that which comes through that grating over there. (He pauses for a moment gesturing for silence) Can you hear the sounds of those above us? It will take you some time before you become as accomplished as I am. My ears do not miss a thing that goes on up there. Once, long ago, I actually heard them singing a song. But, it was soon over. It has been such a long time since then. So long that I feel sure that they will never remember to do it again.

Immortal Being: Oh! The others are always singing. Why only today I heard the children in the hut at the end of the village singing a nursery song about bears.

Convict: You've been here longer than I thought. My friend, I've perfect ears and no song has been sung here in a thousand years. The song I heard was one about men and women. I don't even remember the lyrics any longer. It was that long ago. You had better recite this song you heard so that it wont bother you any more. (he begins laughing to himself.) I must tell you a story: There was a fellow here once who used to see his fiancee lying on his cot all of the time. At the outset he tried to ignore it. When that didn't work he tried to explain it to anyone who would listen. It remained despite all of his efforts. He lapsed into a week of silence. And then on that evening in particular; he rose from the floor, strode over to his cot and gently let himself under the cover. The next morning they removed a cooing idiot from this cage.

Immortal Being: It is an exciting tale, 'though I think that you have left much of it to my imagination.

Convict: (Examining his foot.) If there is any more to it, I didn't know about it.

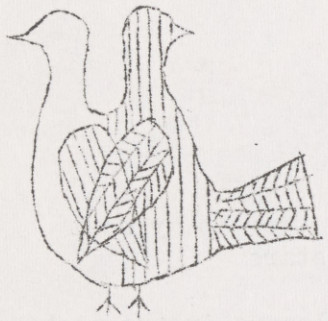
Immoral Being: A straightforward fellow, you are.

Convict: I am proud of my hearing.

Immortal Being: How old are you?

Convict: I was sixteen when I came here. And I've been here, alive, ever since. I am very old and shall become

even much older still.
Immortal Being: Was the journey from your home a difficult one?
Convict: The journey was no more difficult than any one can think of. I went through many strange places and can remember only that most men died on the way. Some were seduced by women and some by the gallows. Some became drunk with wine and some drowned in the river. Some remained silent and a good many became mute. I knew a blind man who sang songs which were comprehensible to all but the blind. There were foxes loose over all the land--I alone heard them baying in the afternoons.
Immortal Being: A perilous and remarkable journey. You are fortunate to be here after all.
Convict: (Aside: Perhaps--though I came to this place in chains.) I was very sad. The chains, you see, were very heavy. I was young and strong but they slowed me never the less. When I arrived, as you must know, they were removed. I shall never have to submit to them again. They made an atrocious amount of noise, too. It was like a million iron doors opening at once, over and over again, with every step.
Immortal Being: When do you propose to leave here?
Convict: Leave here? I live here--I belong here! Why must I leave here?
Immortal Being: Be calm. I asked when YOU proposed to leave here.
Convict: That is the same question.
Immortal Being: (After thinking for some time.) If I told you that I know of a better place, would you go with me to that place.
Convict: What could you find to compare with my present home? You might bring the grate, but would it contain the same pregnant silence which is in it? You could carry the litter and cot, but would it ever again be arranged with all of the cold spots and sharp places as they are now? Could the gloom and odor of these walls ever have happened anywhere but right here? Through these damp walls, leaky pipes, and that dusty grate comes everything in the world. This is the very core of the universe. Once I thought of going up the pipe, through the wall... now...I shall never leave here. Beyond here begins an alien chaos where no men can live and none do.
Immortal Being: But I lived there and knew only the winds, the sun, water, and the smells of the earth below me. Surely these things--even one of these things--is more precious than your moldy dripping walls!
Convict: I have explained it all to you, as it is, and will say no more of it. (Passionately) You are a fool. Who will forever long to roll in bright lights enjoying gritty sand beneath the nails, delighting in oceans, standing drunk beneath the stars. You are hardly more than the dust of a comets tail. You are, in fact, nothing.
Immortal Being: But I am! (Emphatically)



Convict: A ridiculous coincidence, then.
Immortal Being: Your arguments seem to leave much that is unsaid. You extend only your worn-out conclusions to me. These incoherent denouncements are hollow and hardly scornful. I must try very hard to be aware that you are even angry with me.
Convict: You are like a man, as all men are. That is what I am trying to tell you.
Immortal Being: Do you remember who brought you to this place? Who put on your irons? Who was your father, your mother? brother?
Convict: My existence and my home will answer all of those questions.
Immortal Being: Who are you?
Convict: Now?
Immortal Being: Then and now.
Convict: Then I was but a boy now I am a man. And there can be no comparison. There can be no knowledge of a derivative sort which can tell you more.
Immortal Being: Regrettable.
Convict: (Softly) For you.....My non-rustling, non-breathing, odorless tormentor.
Immortal Being: So! And when did you first apprehend this?
Convict: I've never heard you before...(gesturing).
Immortal Being: But what of it?
Convict: I am...
Immortal Being: But, brother!
Convict: (with friendly looking smile). Go away!
Immortal Being: I cannot go away.
Convict: (While looking away), I suppose I am sorry for you. I am afraid I was just amusing myself.
Immortal Being: (In evident pain), But how cruel. You knew then and allowed me to continue.
Convict: I cannot stop you, you fool, I can't help you but I can order you to go away and quickly too!
Immortal Being: (Shouting), I cannot! You know that!
Convict: (Having returned to the grate) Silence!

Final Curtain as Lights Go Lower

Back through memory my mind wanders,
back until memory weakens and is no more
and nothing remains but instinct
and an instinctual feeling of what was
and what must have been---
(Being, created from dust and dirt
and the slime of the sea,
seeking light and the life of the soul).

Seeking still, life and the soul,
and understanding---nothing.

Memory falters, failing its mission;
and instinct deceives---(Hunger,
driving onward; cold and the fear,
to retreat---)
Retreating within myself, false memories
give the illusion of safety.
The mind asks unformed questions;
the memory and instinct chorus in answer:
The soul is lonely---

Harry Mulford

Whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul
I walk the night sky and hear the stars
exploding in still thunder
dropping like rose leaves in the night
The ragged hills---the hills of rugged winter
ice the air with bitter wind
chilling the marrow of my bones
I, too, have stood alone---
comparing the gloom towards the north
with the darkness towards the south
and found the night and anguish---
Far and away
with ever returning phase of the cyclic moon
the dust of my sea sought des'res trails fog
across the heart of dawn
holds back the tide of love
by the sanded opposition of an ebbing night spark

Geraniums

Dusty Moore

A brown box filled with dirt and pregnant seeds stood nascently on the almost green window ledge. Giselle Anastasia leaned on her elbows and anticipatingly visioned the pale blooms quiver in the morning breeze. She closed her eyes.

Over her thin shoulder, the one papered wall of the room slid toward the frameless bed. In one corner was a neatly made cot she slept in on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. This arrangement had been in effect ever since she cared to remember, even before she had seen the pictures of the geraniums in the American magazine; which made it practically an eternity.

Across the hall Jon Micheles' small puppy-like body was curled in the bed. He appeared asleep except for one brown toe that rubbed restlessly against the sheet. Jon heard the sausages frying in the large black skillet and the sound of his mother moving the table toward the middle of the kitchen. Pushing back the covers, he slid to the floor. While dressing himself, he sat on the edge of the bed and looked at the many pictures of sky that were tacked on the wall. By the time he sat down to the table, his mother had already started on the endless sea of washings, Anastasia had cleared her place, and Marie was taking her baby into the bedroom for its morning bath. He finished his breakfast and walked onto the back porch; his mother stopped washing to kiss his still-eggy face, and admonished him not to kick up any dust on his way through the yard. He acknowledged her with a shake of his head as his eyes gravely followed a just-released shirt slip down into the white bubbles of soap.

A mother's long, intense face followed him as he crossed the yard and marched up the slope. She often worried about the thoughts that tumbled under that shock of black hair. Jon Michele had been born five months after the death of her husband and nothing had been easy or right about him since he poked his two feet into the world. She knew that in a few minutes he would be perched cross-legged on his stump throne, surveying a bevy of dandelion and animal subjects, with two brown eyes that were uncomfortably mature for his small face.

Jon reached the throne quickly, and chose this morning to lean at its base, being a king was sometimes hard on the back. In a few moments he was riding on the plush crests of the clouds and watching for Elysse, the hawk, to appear. Elysse served him in a capacity similiar to prime minister and when he was not on the throne, acted as a superior advisor. Elysse was late this morning, and Jon slid down into the grass, letting the woody silence wash over him in great cool waves.

Footsteps on his chest awoke him and he rose, slowly patting Elysse on the chest. They conversed for a while, both expressing sympathy that a misfortunate choice of body prevented Jon from exploring with his old companion. They parted in a short time and Jon wandered down the other side of the slope, picking cherries and an occasional flower, which for convenience he stuck through the buttonholes of his shirt.

Later that afternoon, following Anastasia's seventh wattering of the geranium box, he crossed the gulley and des-

cended into the yard. He took the little multicolored stool from the porch and began taking the clothes from the lines, folding them carefully and putting them into the basket. He walked into the dark kitchen as his mother was scolding Anastasia for leaving the butter in the sun to melt. He watched her waste to a shadow under the assault then run to her room. She buried her face in the bed and savagely chewed on the arm of her rag doll. He sensed a separation when watching the scene; he was held apart by a strange transparent barrier, like the kind you feel when you look at your reflection in a mirror. Giving his mother a quick kiss and dropping in her lap the remains of some flowers he had loved a little too hard during the day, he shuffled off to his room. He lay on his bed looking at the pictures of sky that surrounded him, all had a bird, penciled in somewhere deep in the blue, or high in the white of a cloud.

The next month into summer passed that way, like a high soft blown cloud, and in between his trips to the throne and excursions with Elysse, he had little time to notice the racking cough his mother had developed or the pained frown that had become a common expression. Early in June, when Anastasia's geraniums had finally bloomed, she stopped going into Jon's room and sitting with him to look at his gallery of skies. He missed the silent comfort she offered and one day crept up beside her on the ledge by the plants. Anastasia smiled and reset the already perfectly placed box. They sat quietly for a long time looking at the pink petaled scepters. She broke the silence after a while and asked him about the woods. He sensed that she wanted to tell him something and as she talked, he watched her shine her lips with her tongue frequently. Finally she said, "Jon, did you know that mother was sick?"

"No", he said quietly.

"Well," she continued, "she may have to go to the city soon".

"To the same doctor that Marie went to?" he questioned warily.

"No", said Anastasia, fingering a precious blossom, "I don't think so".

He left the room and when he had reached the hall, he knew that she had buried her face in the doll and was crying as quietly as possible. When he passed his mother's room, he looked in, she was asleep. Marie was sitting by the baby's crib reading when he went out the door he didn't look at her. He tucked in his tee-shirt, he was going to the throne.

He didn't see Elysse for the next two weeks, and on Saturday Mr. and Mrs. Falbert came to take his mother to the city. His mother had gotten worse and during the last few days she hadn't been able to leave her bed at all. He felt troubled when he saw her, but what bothered him more was Anastasia's solemn, tearless crying. Sometimes he wished that he might feel that much a part....

Mr. Falbert was a short, stocky man in a black suit and wore gold rimmed glasses. Mrs. Falbert was a square woman who always wore flowery dresses and facial expressions to match. Jon and Marie wwent with mother, helping to carry her things. In her blue nightgown, Jon had carefully wrapped the picture of blue sky that had been his favorite. Anastasia stayed in her room and looked tearfully through her geraniums at the scene. Mrs. Falbert told Marie for the fourth time that she was having a woman come and stay with them until their mother got well. Marie nodded for the fourth time and then she and Jon kissed their mother once more.

That evening after they had finished their supper, Anna

came. She walked firmly up the front stairs, and giving a warning knock only, pushed open the door and entered their lives. Parcelling out luggage to each of the girls, she ordered Jon to show her to her bedroom. Jon met Marie in the hallway and she rolled her eyes to the ceiling, shrugged her shoulders and went on.

The first thing that Anna did was to remove those "scrubby scraps of paper" tacked on Jon's wall and dispose of them. Anastasia, completely and unbelievably awed at this prospect, did all but stand twenty-four hour watch by her geraniums, torturing herself with the thought that Anna would send them to a similiar fate.

Jon said very little for the next few days and stayed out as much as possible; talking, walking and just sitting quietly with Elysse. For some reason, Jon felt a strange sense of anticipation now when he was with his friend, and occasionally he would catch Elysse looking at him strangely. Jon talked a little more than usual, perhaps a nervous reaction to Elysse's strange behavior.

Late one evening about two weeks after Anna's arrival, Jon was lying in bed watching the night hang velvet about his room, when he felt a strange sensation in his arms, but it soon went away and he fell into a quiet but troubled sleep. The next morning he rose and passingly experienced a queer stiffness in his arms. When he was struggling with the bed covers he noticed some dirt on the window ledge and stood there motionless for a few minutes, thinking. Soon his eyes brightened and a fascinated little smile crept to his mouth. He skipped out to breakfast.

Anastasia was seated beside him at the table. He reached for her hand, squeezing it reassuringly. He whispered to her to take good care of the geraniums and slid off the chair. The "yes" she answered with sounded rather lugubrious, but then she managed a smile with her eyes and he felt he could go. He watched Marie put the bundle into the crib and glanced down as he passed. The baby's face needed painting badly and one of the ears had cracked completely off. He paused as he passed Anna on the porch and hoped for Anastasia's and Marie's sake that the tub would be especially greedy that day. He kicked off his shoes and headed up the hill.

Three days passed and long searches over the hills had proved fruitless. Anastasia was beside herself and would sit in the room staring at the flowers for hours on end. The next day she went up to the hills and merely wandered. That evening she returned to the house and scuffed to her room. She sensed something strange and automatically looked toward the geraniums to see if they were all right. The sun was dropping and the petals looked like delicate dragonfly wings. She watched them change character as the sun kept falling. They soon metamorphosed into cups of light and each blossom looked like an alter candle lighting the room. Without hesitation or a single revealing glance, she reached for the flowers and carefully picked each one, then she took a

piece of newspaper and meticulously wrapped them. She made her way out of the house and across the yard. She took the gully as it afforded more concealment. In a few minutes she reached the stump and unloaded her precious cargo, arranging them carefully on the throne. She stood back for a few minutes to survey her work. She picked a leaf and felt its' lustrous shine by rubbing it against her lip. Suddenly she maneuvered the leaf into the palm of her hand, then her eye followed the branch up to the top of the tree. She climbed up, and sliding as close as she dared to the end of the branch, stopped. She scanned the horizon for some teletale sign of wings as the kaleidoscopic sun dropped through the poplars. Seeing nothing, she began to descend and the sun followed her down; first silhouetting her lithe body, then sprinkling her with gems. The earth received her small leap like a mother's lap would. The sun for a last effort emblazoned her head with a prismic crown of jewels. Anastasia picked a flower on the way down the mountain, and so that her hands would be free to swing in the wind, placed it in the buttonhole of her blouse.

The Sterile

Pleasure would have been his mistress,
Asceticism, his lawful wife.
He did not take a bedfellow,
But leaned himself against a wall and slept.

Judie O'Brien

Twas Brillig, Oh Brooklyn

John Luby

Winter grey Brooklyn morning pre-sun shadow. Alarms clattering making outstretched hands grope, making mouths twist, bodies burn, nerves rattle.

John P. Endicott III, grade school prodigy, knickered pride of his mother's Catholic eye, seeing big fuzzy dream walks on through yellow fields of marigold, it'd sneeze dust penetrating the air; must hold the breath he's thinking. Lungs bursting all the way to the stream where the red horse sits on a set of steps. Hops on his back with spectacular ease, a kick....Whew. Hi Ho Silver and he's a dark masked man, now they'll never get him. As the horse leaps off the top step into the sky, it reaches up with a long thin arm and shakes him.

John awake with the fuzzy horror of the disappointment his red horse gone. The smell of fields now the smell of early morning coffee. Rub the eyes until those little white spots appear. Ah yes that's better little man.

Time to get up sweetie, young mother leaning to leave a mouthful of sun on his cheek, tickling him until all the covers are kicked off, the little teddy bears on his pajamas turning somersaults and cartwheels. The green hornet is jumping out of bed and out of his tops and bottoms into tweedy knickers, woolen socks and genuine U S keds to take him on shadowy Lamont Cranston feet to the suds of his bathroom toothpaste.

Through the sound of running water while standing barely above the sink, he thinks of the sticky pot with the inevitable morning oatmeal, his distaste forever present. Ma says it sticks to your ribs, a voice tells him. Sticks to your ribs rolling around in his head with pictures of oatmeal clots on sticky rib cages steaming forever after, amen.

John hurry up, you'll be late for school, has him running into the bedroom to get books and now dashing to table where it waits. Aw Maw, I'm not hungry. Eat it anyway, how can you grow up to be a big boy if you don't eat what's good for you. Sitting impatiently, legs swinging back and forth, heels striking the frame of the chair one at a time, while stirring patterns, making swirls with his spoon. It needs more sugar...more milk...a little more cinnamon...more mild, more sugar. John! Stop your playing and eat now or you won't get any dessert for supper tonight. Wondering what delight awaits him, he manages to gag it down spoonful after eternal spoonful. Seeing the flowers on the bottom of the dish he's off the chair with a dash and to the closet for the black raincoat and boots he's told to wear because it's going to rain today the weatherman says. He doubting, looking out the window to a peeping sun, puts on the raincoat and the little bell shaped hat that has a place for the face to stick out, and struggles with the boots watching each heel impression getting closer to the bottom...now! Ah! Okay. Gu-bye ma. Kisses her on the cheek, she saying, Be careful crossing the streets.

Past the goldfish tank, around the edge of the bannister and down to open the door, go out...past the Pelligrinos' and past the Michellis', out to the driveway to the sound of buses growing louder as they pass the driveway and fading as they go out further up and down the avenues. Trot to Tommy and Freddy"s. Standing under the windows on the sidewalk, he gives the two-fingered whistle and

then the secret call, that blood curdling Tarzan cry, Ah Ah! Ah? Ah! Ah? Ahhhhhh. Curtains stirring after a few minutes of his impatience. Aface at the window. The window opening and Freddy sticking his curly ragamuffin dark Italian head out saying, Be right down in a minute, ya dope ya!

John goes to the side door in the alley and jumping up and down on an ant, trying to make it rain, hears the crashing Tommy and Freddy barreling down the stairs a mile a minute. The door opens and they spill out on to the sidewalk, arms and legs and sneakers and books. Tommy kicks John in the ass, and Freddy throws an arm around Tommy's head, headlocking him while John punches him in the arm. Amid the constant smell of garlic these two wild brothers jump and flail. A windows opens from the second floor and someone yells, Hey, go to school and stop that fighting. Let's go. They skip out ot the sidewalk, arms around each others shoulders.

Stop at Artie's. Hey, Artieeeee! Artie's head to the window, opens it, yells Okay. Bring your stick ball bat, yells John. Artie down and out on the street, they walk across 13th Avenue, stop at Benny's Candy Store for some licorice, and horsing around, make their way to P.S. 201.

The sound of the school yard penetrates their little ears from two or three blocks away and their excitement grows. They stop at 12th Avenue laughing at an old dog limping on a leash next to an old man who is also limping.

They spy Betty Ann, Elda and Barbara across the street, and running across, fifty feet in front of the oncoming traffic, yelling, Hey! Hey! Yahoo! Hoo!!! they rush the girls. Tommy repeatedly gooses Barbara, saying Whopeeee! and Barbara punching and kicking him yelling, Get outa there. John leading Betty Ann around by the pigtails from behind her so she doesn't kick him in the shins, grins like a demon, and Freddy pulls Elda by the skirt and yells Whoo! Whoo! while she swings wildly at him with her school bag. Artie stands watching, jumping up and down with glee.

The day passes slowly, John looking out the windows almost all the time, aware of the constant drone of his teachers, and the now bleak winter day with its bare dead trees and gray brown sadness.

At lunch in the dun colored cafeteria, he hates the wartime tasteless water mixed tomato with rice soup that they always seemed to serve everyday back in 1946. He digs with extreme eagerness into his peanut butter, lettuce and mayonnaise sandwich, and equally into the cold container of milk.

A swipe of the arm across the mouth and he darts out up the steps and into the big fenced in school yard with it's inevitable handball courts and basket ball hoops.

Fa La La Hoop de Doop, he takes his Spaulding Hi-Bouncer out of his pocket and throws it at the court board saying, Grounder down to first! Picks it up throws it to second! On down to third, in time for a double play, ladies and gentlemen! Pitcher winds up and throws it...Brrrinnnnnng. The school yard bell interrupts the game and he's one of the quiet inside school children, back to Miss Palmer's penmanship class.

John wanting to be alone goes out the back exit onto 78th Street, a little black shadow striving to walk on every other crack of the cement. He sees the joy of his little school time life, and decides to sneak up on her; now an Indian with soft moccasins, treading softly on leaves,

quiet, quiet, sh shhh!

The back of Loretta Shifmocher's neck is interesting; pigtails, - staring at the place where the hairs are parted in the back of her head, John feels strange inside and remembers the time he and Barbara were kissing in back of the Michellis' garage and Elda came and seeing them threatened to tell on them. John couldn't understand what was wrong with this, but the tone of Elda's voice (Elda who was the older motherly big sister of all) made John think it wise to stop and that maybe, for some unknown reason it was bad.

Hi Loretta, he says shyly, she turning around pigtails swinging, smiling sweet angelic. Ooo Weee heart thump. Can I walk you home. Yes. Give me your books. Okay. The two of them walk on, stopping for traffic lights automatically. John is oblivious to all things except his wild joy and the sensations within his stomach. He is afraid to speak. She is thinking of her homework. They go on down winter streets to Lorettas' house, not saying a word, only looking at one another occasionally and turning away shyly. Goodbye John, as she takes her books. John kicks a crumpled cigarette package from the curb into the gutter, Goodbye Loretta...gee whiz.

Loretta watches John from the top of the stairs at the door as he goes swinging his books in his arm and takes wide strides trying to step in every other cement box of the sidewalk.

John runs up three flights of stairs door slams, Hi ma! Hello dear, from the kitchen. John's coat lying in a heap on the bed, his books scattered next to them. He leaps on to the bed with a Superman comic book, and reads of Clark Kent, the magnificent, leaping tall buildings in a single bound. He's up and away. He sees the pose of flight in the air. Looking down at cities and fields and highways and lakes and mountains, he feels the warm comfortable breeze blowing on his face, like in the dreams he has of him soaring above all the people on the streets merely by flapping his arms instead of using a cape. John runs to the closet and there from a secret hiding place, (known only to himself and the keeper of the gates, his mother) he slowly pulls out the secret to the skies, his white sheet cape with the big red S sewn on the back.

Now he's ready to fly and with his arms held over his head, he's out of the room and racing down the hall. Shhhhhhhuuuuuuu! He has visions of himself flying past Freddy and Tommy's and hanging at their 3rd story window watching them eat their usual spaghetti dinner, and then with the worst possible face imaginable, tapping on the window and watching their amazement and their mother's horror as he flies off over the rooftops. Little tot with wings of gold. Now. Run. Climb to the window and look out on the roof tops and alleys and garages that are so familiar in your flights. Open the window now and feel the winter air in your face. You sail, glide, out, over. Smooth, sweet flight. Awayyy.

The sweet mother of his life is in her warm kitchen preparing baked beans and coleslaw and cornbread for their supper. Now to make the chocolate pudding. John's favorite. Yes! Deedle Deedle Dumpling my son John went to bed with his.....John? she yells. He must be outside playing she says when no answer comes. She pours the pudding powder into the bowl and starts to add milk, and shivers momentarily. Better put a sweater on, I'm chilly. Walking to the bedroom she sees the back window near the stairs open, and wondering why it is, goes to close it. On arriving at the window she notices that something is strange, her clothes line is gone. How in the world? She leans out to look and down on the pavement in the alley....She screams and the bottom of her heart and stomach give way.

Diary of a Prophet

I

On each new dawn I dimly see
That light of distant ageing sun,
Which high above my prophet's head
Seeks futilely to penetrate
That small pathetic window, which
Bars my lunacy from those others
Who, being more fortunate, have
Never felt the weight of madness;
Nor despair of ever greeting
On their mornings a happy sun;
Nor must needs confine their friendship
To dungeon vermin, which scurry
Round me in my cell, waiting
For the time when they may be guests
On the inactive remains of
A warm but lonely corpse.
All earthly moorings have I cast
Off the parched rollcall of my soul,
Except perhaps those heavier names
Of Hunger, Thirst; and destitute
Umbrage to Holy Eloquence.
Oh! to end this savage doom-pulse
Hard pounding pernicious rhythms
On the bulkhead of sleepless nights!
In promethean shadows I
Contemplate with blind-burning eyes
One feat few mortals speculate---
Just once to steal that hopeful fire
From uncaring heaven's banquet.
My mind, dimmed with age, not clear now,
Reflects time back through life's mirrors,
Mental, bizarre and sometimes blurred;
Striving perpetually to
Combat those errant impressions
Of antiquated memories.
Yet in some image prognostic
Investments of infinity.

II

Unlike those musty legions who
Before me went scraping feet in
Bleeding supplication before
Doubt's altars and high thick bronze doors,
This scarred inner shield I shall mend
To foil keen edge of striking death.
Forsaken, even in my dreams;
Confused by constant messengers
Who bring midnight ghost-chain anguish,
My cries more futilely do fall
Than those which surely issued forth
From the mouth of exile Adam.

Rising in my throat, the sacred
Lute song chokes and is profaned by
Master fear, nurtured through incensed
Corridors hidden at the secret
Unfathomed bottoms of madness.

III

Surrender not, Lamb, to Retribution.
(insatiable beast of infamous glut!)
While strength remains, breach the blasphemous walls;
Soon weary, seek out lost Confirmation.
Hear me, Zarathustra, I have fought up
Twisting stairs from stench of mental abyss;
Until at topmost parapet, there torn
By angry winds and staggering vistas,
My bold new voice did brave as battle horn
Blare, reverberate, batter and echo,
Crumbling the hollow walls in mystic triumph
Which had confined that endless row of halls
Comprising my spiritual labyrinth.
Oh, harshly did hard Truth reveal there
That I had not departed mad dungeon,
Nor scaled the heights, nor breached the walls,
But found instead Reality waiting--
A subtle world of blind indifference.
Why, God, this mental crucification?
Not Indid deny thee three times at dawn.
Better by far the spike and cross of death!
Hear I no voice save that which shouts within
From empty protest of an endless age
Of earthbound purgatory nights?
Speak not, God, of Alpha and Omega;
Armageddon forever follows those
Who dare beyond their hollow walls to dream.

W. Miller